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Opinion

Title **Impact Assessment accompanying the Communication on combating HIV/AIDS in the EU and the neighbourhood - strategy and second action plan (2010 -2013)**

(draft version of 2 September 2009; resubmission)

Lead DG **DG SANCO**

1) Impact Assessment Board Opinion

(A) Context

The Commission communication on combating HIV/AIDS, 2006-2009, launched a European action plan which is coming to an end in 2009. The action plan (proposing about 40 different actions) and the accompanying Commission communication served as a guideline for priorities for funding through the European Health Programmes and for activities under the Research Framework programmes. The action plan has been implemented to a large extent in a coordinated manner among major stakeholders over the last years. The current impact assessment accompanies a Communication presenting a second action plan.

(B) Positive aspects

The revised version of the IA report presents a better overview of implementation of the current action plan in Annex 4. The report provides further details on 'agreed targets' mentioned in the first specific objective, and explains better the specific geographical focus of the action plan.

(C) Main recommendations for improvements

The recommendations below are listed in order of descending importance.

General recommendation: The IA report still needs to improve on a number of aspects mentioned in the Board's first opinion in order to provide a sufficient analytical basis for a new initiative. It should be more specific about the reasons why some of the commitments of the current action plan were not met, and explain how/to what extent the new proposal will address the problems in implementing the

current action plan. The report needs to be clearer about the content of the re-defined baseline scenario and newly defined policy option. The operational objectives should be expressed in terms of specific deliverables, targets and deadlines, so that they can be monitored more easily.

(1) Address more fully the reasons why some commitments of the current action plan were not met. Be more explicit about the content of the re-defined baseline scenario and newly defined policy option. While the revised report provides a better assessment of the implementation of the actions of the current action plan, it should be more specific about the reasons why some of the actions did not deliver the expected results. It should explain why a certain number of political commitments have not been met. In its first opinion, the Board suggested to re-define the baseline scenario to include elements of the current action plan which are likely to continue should the action plan not be renewed at the end of this year, and, if possible, to examine an option to extend the existing action plan for a further year to allow for a formal evaluation which would serve as the evidence base for a new proposal. Although an attempt has been made to follow the Board's recommendation on redrafting the baseline scenario, further work is needed on this. Option 2 which is currently defined as 'no EU policy and action plan' seems to correspond more closely to the baseline than the current option 1. The report should give more detail about the content of these two options.

(2) Explain how/to what extent the preferred option will address the inefficiencies of the current action plan. While the revised report provides a comparison table between the current and future action plan explaining which elements of the action plan will be reinforced, scaled back or dropped, it needs to specify better how/to what extent the new action plan will tackle the shortcomings of the current plan.

(3) Express the operational objectives in terms of specific deliverables, targets and deadlines, in such a way that criteria can be defined to assess their success. Instead of deleting the operational objectives presented in the original impact assessment, the report should follow the recommendation from Board's first opinion, and – where feasible – reformulate these objectives in terms of specific deliverables, targets and deadlines. If this is not possible, the report should explain why. The report should define and present (at least some of) the indicators for monitoring, instead of simply stating that such indicators would be established (section 6.3 and 9).

(D) Procedure and presentation

It appears that all necessary procedural elements have been complied with.

2) IAB scrutiny process

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Author DG	DG SANCO
External expertise used	No
Date of Board Meeting	Written procedure
Date of adoption of Opinion	<p style="text-align: center;">25 SEP. 2009</p> <p>The present opinion concerns a resubmitted draft IA report. The first opinion was issued on 29 June 2009.</p>